

WE CLAIM:

1. A method for reducing set-up time for calls, comprising:
 - configuring at least one channel for calls;
 - 5 reserving said at least one configured channel and storing information relating to said at least one configured channel;
 - receiving at least one command, including information, to allocate a channel to a call, and thereafter selecting a configured channel the stored information for which matches said information included in said command; and
 - 10 assigning at least one configured channel to each said call.
2. The method as claimed in Claim 1 wherein said step of configuring includes defining the capacity and direction of operation of said channel.
- 15 3. The method as claimed in Claim 1, each configured channel having a class, location, and status, wherein said step of reserving and tracking includes storing in a separate record of a database, information about the class, location, and status of each configured channel, which record is available for comparison with said at least one command.
- 20 4. The method as claimed in Claim 1 wherein said step of receiving includes storing said command.
5. The method as claimed in Claim 3 wherein said step of matching includes comparing said command with records in said database until a matching record is found.
- 25 6. The method as claimed in Claim 3 wherein said step of allocating includes providing the location of said configured channel for assignment to said call, and updating the status information of said configured channel stored in the associated record of said database.
- 30 7. A system for reducing set-up time for a call, comprising:
 - a first agent for configuring and reserving at least one channel;
 - 35 a second agent for supplying communication resources including said configured and reserved channels in response to a communication from said first agent, said first agent also being communicative with a principal; and

said principal adapted to acquire access to configured channels for the call by sending a resource allocation command to said first agent to allocate one of said at least one configured and reserved channel to the call.

- 5 8. The system as claimed in Claim 7 further wherein said first agent gathers information respecting said communication resources for the purpose of splitting said resources into configured channels.
- 10 9. The system as claimed in Claim 8 further wherein said information includes the class, location, and status of said resources and said first agent stores said information before it receives allocation commands from said principal.
- 15 10. The system as claimed in Claim 7 further wherein said first agent can reserve and track configured channels.
- 20 11. The system as claimed in Claim 7 further wherein said first agent can receive allocation commands, which commands it can match to at least one configured channel.
- 25 12. The system as claimed in Claim 7 further wherein said first agent can allocate a separate reserved configured channel in response to each allocation command.
- 30 13. The system as claimed in Claim 7 further wherein said first agent communicates with said principal faster than said principal can communicate with said second agent.
- 35 14. The system as claimed in Claim 7 further wherein said first agent pre-allocates thereby reserving said configured channels before it receives allocation commands from said principal, further wherein said first agent stores information respecting said pre-allocated configured channels in a database.
16. A first agent for a system for reducing set-up time for calls, comprising:
means for configuring at least one channel for said calls;
means for reserving and tracking all said configured channels;

- means for receiving at least one command to allocate a channel to a call;
means for matching each said command to a configured channel; and
means for allocating a separate configured channel to each said call.
- 5 17. The first agent as claimed in Claim 16 further having means for communicating with a second agent supplier of communication resources for accessing said communication resources and querying said second agent respecting physical resources that are available for splitting and configuration into channels.
- 10 18. The first agent as claimed in Claim 16 further wherein there are means for splitting said physical resources.
- 15 19. The first agent as claimed in Claim 16 further wherein there are means for configuring channels from said physical resources.
- 20 20. The first agent as claimed in Claim 16 further wherein there are means for allocating and reserving said configured channels in addition to means for deallocating and releasing said configured channels.
- 25 21. The first agent as claimed in Claim 16 further having means for recording information respecting said configured channels in a database for tracking in addition to means for updating said database as a result of the allocation or deallocation of configured channels.
- 30 22. The first agent as claimed in Claim 16 further having means for allocating individual configured channels to said calls and confirming to a principal each said allocation of an individual configured channel.
- 35 23. A method for reducing set-up time for calls in a network supporting both data and voice type calls, the method comprising:
pre-allocating some configured channels to be available for data calls and pre-allocating some said channels to be available for voice calls;
receiving at least one command, including information, to provide at least one configured channel for either a voice or a data call; and
assigning, based on said information, at least one pre-allocated configured channel in response to said at least one command.

24. A method for reducing set-up time for calls in a network, the method comprising:
- pre-allocating some configured channels to be available for calls;
 - receiving at least one command, including information, to provide at least one configured channel for a call; and
- 5 assigning, based on said information, at least one pre-allocated configured channel in response to said at least one command.